



City of Seattle

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News Release

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Seattle's Final Round of "One-Less-Car" Study Proves that Families Can Live Happily with "One Less Car" Study helps make it easier for residents to get around.

Seattle wraps up its third and final round of the "One-Less-Car" study, having proved that families can live with "one-less-car" while still getting where they want to go, saving money and improving the quality of their lives.

This third and final round of the study added new elements to prove that when it comes to living with fewer cars, "You can do it." The non-driving period of the study was increased from six to nine weeks and the surprising cost of owning a car was reinforced more acutely by providing each household with a weekly stipend equal to the amount that they would save if they did not own their particular extra car. The final round included the most diverse set of participants yet in terms of household size, income, neighborhood represented and age. In addition, forty-one households participated in the third round, almost double the number of households in each previous round.

"This third round showed that regardless of the shape, size or location of the household, Seattlites can all take small steps to improve our transportation system and make it easier to get around," said Grace Crunican, Director of Seattle Department of Transportation. "These families have proven that we can make choices about how we get around and enjoy spending less time in our cars. They all found they could get around more on transit, walking, bicycling, taking taxis and using Flexcar. Most families tell us they will continue to take the bus or ride their bike, and think about whether they need to drive to where they want to go. Citizens making smart transportation choices helps us all achieve the Mayor's priority of creating an efficient, fair and clean transportation system."

"The goal of the study was to demonstrate ways to ease neighborhood traffic and reduce automobile-caused air pollution. By using the full range of transportation modes available, Seattle families can not only save an average of over \$4,000 per year (\$85 per week), but also improve neighborhood livability and the environment," said Jemae Hoffman, SDOT's Mobility Manager. "In just nine weeks, the forty-one families in this study saved over 25,000 miles of driving – enough to drive around the planet. While not every Seattle family can get by with one-less-car permanently, the study proves that everyone can make smart transportation choices, which save money and enhance the quality of our lives."

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While the households are struck by how much money they can save and by how many other transportation options they have, most are even more struck by how their lives improved after shedding a car. “Since we were both catching a bus home from downtown, we started going out to dinner each Friday night,” said Larry Erickson and Susan Holt of West Seattle. Not only did they add this element to their lives, but their savings from not having the extra car more than paid for their Friday night treat. Larry and Susan decided to sell their extra car for good and say, “It’s very unlikely we will ever again have two cars- at least not while living in Seattle.”

The **“One-Less-Car” Demonstration Study** is part of the city’s **Way to Go, Seattle!** family of trip reduction programs. The One-Less-Car study requires a commitment that participating household do not drive one of their cars for nine weeks, and that each driving member of the household keeps a daily diary of their travel behavior, including costs, and when and why they took a bus or taxi, used Flexcar, biked, walked, and rode with a neighbor. Participants also kept qualitative comments in their diary, such as how they consolidated trips, and when and why the transportation mode they chose either worked well or was too inconvenient. The data collected will help the City understand how Seattleites make transportation choices, and will be used in crafting a future public education campaign. Results of the studies will also be shared with over 20 municipalities throughout the country which have expressed interest in starting their own **“One-Less-Car”** project.